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Dept. of State, RPS/IPS, Margaret P. Grafeld, Dir.  
☒ Release ( ) Excise ( ) Deny ( ) Declassify  
Date 2/22/02 Exemption \_\_\_\_\_

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E.O. 12356: N/A  
TAGS: HO, PREL, PHUM  
SUBJECT: APPROVED PRESS GUIDANCE ON ALLEGED HIT LIST

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 13797

1. IN THE FUTURE, CABLES PROVIDING DRAFT PRESS GUIDANCE SHOULD, IN MOST CASES, BE CLASSIFIED OR DESIGNATED FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE UNTIL THE GUIDANCE IS APPROVED OR USED.

2. REFTTEL DRAFT GUIDANCE IS APPROVED FOR CONTINGENCY USE WITH MODIFICATIONS AS PROVIDED BELOW:

Q: WHAT IS THE U.S. REACTION TO PRESS REPORTS THAT HONDURAN DEATH SQUADS ARE BEING ACTIVATED AND TO THE PUBLICATION OF AN ALLEGED "HIT LIST" OF 15 PROMINENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HONDURANS?

A: WE HAVE NO EVIDENCE TO SUBSTANTIATE THE ALLEGATIONS OF DEATH SQUAD ACTIVITIES IN HONDURAS OR THE EXISTENCE OF A "HIT LIST." SUCH CHARGES APPEAR TO BE PART OF A POLITICALLY-MOTIVATED EFFORT TO SLANDER HONDURAS'

GENERALLY GOOD RECORD OF CONSISTENT PROGRESS ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES. THERE WERE NO SUBSTANTIATED ACCUSATIONS OF POLITICALLY-MOTIVATED DEATHS OR ANY DOCUMENTED DISAPPEARANCES IN HONDURAS IN 1985; NO EVIDENCE OF EITHER POLITICALLY-MOTIVATED DEATHS OR DISAPPEARANCES HAS COME TO THE U.S. EMBASSY'S ATTENTION IN 1986. THE

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DEMOCRATICALLY-ELECTED GOVERNMENT OF PRESIDENT AZCONA,  
WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE ARMED FORCES, HAS AFFIRMED ON  
NUMEROUS OCCASIONS ITS FIRM SUPPORT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS.

Q. WHAT ABOUT THE CHARGES THAT THE CIA, THROUGH THE  
"CONTRAS," COLLABORATES WITH SPECIAL UNITS IN THE ARMED  
FORCES TO THREATEN AND TO ELIMINATE POLITICAL OPPONENTS  
IN HONDURAS?

A: THE CHARGES ARE ABSURD. THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IS NOT  
-- AND HAS NOT -- ENGAGED IN SUCH ALLEGED ACTIVITIES. SHULTZ

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